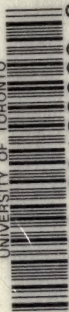


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A Hymn of Empire



A Hymn of Empire and Other Poems

By

FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT

Author of "The Soul's Quest, and Other Poems,"

"My Lattice, and Other Poems," "Elton

Hazlewood," "The Unnamed

Lake, and Other Poems,"

"Poems Old and

New," etc.

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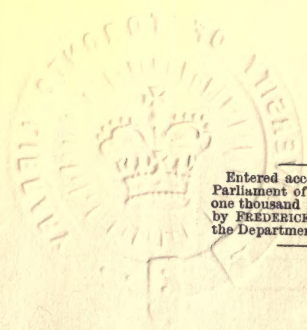


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TO THE MEMORY
OF
"LITTLE FRIEND."

*"Into the Infinite
Pass we for ever:
Knowing the Light of Light
Faileth us never."*

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A Hymn of Empire

LORD, by whose might the Heavens stand,
The Source from whom they came,
Who holdest nations in Thy hand,
And call'st the stars by name,
Thine ageless forces do not cease
To mould us as of yore—
The chiselling of the arts of peace,
The anvil-strokes of war.

Then bind our realms in brotherhood,
Firm laws and equal rights,
Let each uphold the Empire's good
In freedom that unites;
And make that speech whose thunders roll
Down the broad stream of time,
The harbinger from pole to pole
Of love and peace sublime.

Lord, turn the hearts of cowards who prate,
 Afraid to dare or spend,
The doctrine of a narrower State
 More easy to defend ;
Not this the watchword of our sires
 Who breathed with ocean's breath,
Not this our spirit's ancient fires
 Which nought could quench but death.

Strong are we ? Make us stronger yet ;
 Great ? Make us greater far.
Our feet antarctic oceans fret,
 Our crown the polar star ;
Round Earth's wild coasts our batteries speak,
 Our highway is the main,
We stand as guardian of the weak,
 We burst the oppressor's chain.

Great God, uphold us in our task,
 Keep pure and clean our rule,
Silence the honeyed words which mask
 The wisdom of the fool.
The pillars of the world are Thine ;
 Pour down Thy bounteous grace,
And make illustrious and divine
 The sceptre of our race.

The Storm

O GRIP the earth, ye forest trees,
Grip well the earth to-night,
The Storm-God rides across the seas
To greet the morning light.

All clouds that wander through the skies
Are tangled in his net,
The frightened stars have shut their eyes,
The breakers fume and fret.

The birds that cheer the woods all day
Now tremble in their nests,
The giant branches round them sway,
The wild wind never rests.

The squirrel and the cunning fox
Have hurried to their holes,
Far off, like distant earthquake shocks,
The muffled thunder rolls.

In scores of hidden woodland dells,
Where no rough winds can harm,
The timid wild-flowers toss their bells
In reasonless alarm.

Only the mountains rear their forms,
Silent and grim and bold ;
To them the voices of the storms
Are as a tale re-told.

They saw the stars in heaven hung,
They heard the great Sea's birth,
They know the ancient pain that wrung
The entrails of the Earth.

Sprung from great Nature's royal lines,
They share her deep repose,—
Their rugged shoulders robed in pines,
Their foreheads crowned with snows.

But now there comes a lightning flash,
And now on hill and plain
The charging clouds in fury dash,
And blind the world with rain.

The River

WHY hurry, little river,
Why hurry to the sea?
There is nothing there to do
But to sink into the blue
And all forgotten be.
There is nothing on that shore
But the tides for evermore,
And the faint and far-off line
Where the winds across the brine
For ever, ever roam
And never find a home.

Why hurry, little river,
From the mountains and the mead,
Where the graceful elms are sleeping
And the quiet cattle feed?
The loving shadows cool
The deep and restful pool,
And every tribute stream
Brings its own sweet woodland dream

Of the mighty woods that sleep
Where the sighs of earth are deep,
And the silent skies look down
On the savage mountain's frown.

Oh, linger, little river,
Your banks are all so fair,
Each morning is a hymn of praise,
Each evening is a prayer.
All day the sunbeams glitter
On your shallows and your bars,
And at night the dear God stills you
With the music of the stars.

On the Return of Our Troops

THE seal set on our nationhood are these
Strong men, returning victors from the war ;
Up to the battle's very front they bore
Our country's honour, till with every breeze
Fame sang their valour round the seven seas.
For us they braved death in the cannon's roar,
For us their comrades died, and nevermore
Will see the loved homes 'neath our maple trees.

Throw wide thy gates, O Canada, throw wide
The portals of thy gratitude ; these men
Have roused the God in us. Now cast aside
All littleness of aim. With courage high
And loftier purpose, to thy tasks again,
And carve thine own illustrious destiny.

The City Church

NOT only in the hush of mountain lands,
And on the storms which shroud the boundless
deep,
Does Nature's God His awful vigil keep.
Here, in this church, though raised by human hands,
Though in the traffic-crowded street it stands,
God's throne is set ; and while men work or sleep,
He wakes and listens to the hearts that weep,
And in His love makes straight life's tangled strands.

New generations come and pass away,
They pour their anguish into God's kind ear,
They gaze up mutely towards His unseen face ;
And, compassed with His mercies day by day,
They stand unshaken, while this earthly sphere
Rolls through the dark infinity of space.

**Inscription on
Soldiers' Monument,
Quebec**

NOT by the power of Commerce, Art, or Pen
Shall our great Empire stand ; nor has it stood :
But by the noble deeds of noble men,
Heroic lives, and Heroes' outpoured blood.

Portae Silvarum

O SINGING birds, O singing birds, ye sing in field
and sky
The simple songs of love and joy ye sang in days
gone by ;
I hear you in the meadows now and up the mountain
stream,
And as I listen to your voice I dream an old-world
dream.

O singing birds, O singing birds, ye sang in ancient
Greece
Ere Paris found the fatal fruit, or Jason sought the
fleece ;
And from the Attic mountain tops ye saw the dawn
uprise,
Her feet upon the golden sea and wonder in her
eyes.

Ye heard the shepherd pipe at dawn, and piped again
with him
Until the flocks came winding out where forest glades
were dim ;
Ye sang in dewy dell and woke the wild-flower from
its dream,
And watched the fauns and satyrs dance beside the
woodland stream.

Ye sang your songs at noonday when Athenian crews
went down
Between the dusty walls that joined Peiræus with
the town,
Until across the sparkling deep the triremes sailed
away,
And up Poseidon's altar steps the women went to
pray.

Ye sang your songs at eventide when on the sacred
hill
The light was slowly dying down and mists were
sleeping still ;
While two by two the maidens went, with lilies in
their hand,
And asked each other of the love they could not
understand.

And in the night, when stars looked down and herds
were gathered in,
And little brooks with tinkling voice made music
clear and thin,
At intervals your note again would thrill the forest's
rest,
When dreamland fancies woke your joy or breezes
stirred your nest.

O singing birds, O singing birds, who pipe in shade
and sun,
Ye fill the world with gladness still, ye bind us all
in one ;
Your songs are of untroubled days, of mornings glad
and free,
And merry rivers leaping down the mountains to the
sea.

O singing birds, O singing birds, the ages pass
away,
The world is growing old, and we grow older day
by day ;
Pour out your deathless songs again to men of every
tongue,
And wake the music in man's heart that keeps the
old world young.

Stella

(From the Greek anthology)

DEAR Love, thou gazest at the starlit skies,
Thou who art star to me ;
Would I were heaven with all its myriad eyes
Gazing on thee.

God's Youth

IN the star-depths of children's eyes,
Where burns the light of truth,
I see, reflected from the skies,
God's own eternal youth.

In the Winter Woods

WINTER forests mutely standing
Naked on your bed of snow,
Wide your knotted arms expanding
To the biting winds that blow,
Nought ye heed of storm or stress,
Stubborn, silent, passionless.

Buried is each woodland treasure,
Gone the leaves and mossy rills,
Gone the birds that filled with pleasure
All the valleys and the hills ;
Ye alone of all that host
Stand like soldiers at your post.

Grand old trees, the words ye mutter,
Nodding in the frosty wind,
Wake some thoughts I cannot utter,
But which haunt the heart and mind,
With a meaning, strange and deep,
As of visions seen in sleep.

Something in my inmost thinking
Tells me I am one with you,
For a subtle bond is linking
Nature's offspring through and through,
And your spirit like a flood
Stirs the pulses of my blood.

While I linger here and listen
To the creaking boughs above,
Hung with icicles that glisten
As if kindling into love,
Human heart and soul unite
With your majesty and might.

Horizontal, rich with glory,
Through the boughs the red sun's rays
Clothe you as some grand life-story
Robes an aged man with praise,
When, before his setting sun,
Men recount what he has done.

But the light is swiftly fading,
And the wind is icy cold,
And a mist the moon is shading,
Pallid in the western gold ;
In the night-winds still ye nod,
Sentinels of Nature's God.

Now with gladdened steps returning
To the world from whence I came,
Leave I all the great west burning
With the day that died in flame,
And the stars, with silver ray,
Light me on my homeward way.

A Sister of Charity

SHE made a nunnery of her life,
Plain duties hedged it round,
No echoes of the outer strife
Could reach its hallowed ground.

Her rule was simple as her creed,
She tried to do each day
Some act of kindness that might speed
A sad soul on its way.

She had no wealth, and yet she made
So many rich at heart ;
Her lot was hidden, yet she played
No inconspicuous part.

Some wondered men had passed her by,
Some said she would not wed,
I think the secret truth must lie
Long buried with the dead.

That cheery smile, that gentle touch,
That heart so free from stain,
Could have no other source but such
As lies in conquered pain.

All living creatures loved her well,
And blessed the ground she trod ;
The pencillings in her Bible tell
Her communing with God.

And when the call came suddenly,
And sleep preceded death,
There was no struggle we could see,
No hard and laboured breath.

Gently as dawn the end drew nigh ;
Her life had been so sweet,
I think she did not need to die
To reach the Master's feet.

William McKinley

(A Tribute of Kindred)

BROTHER of kings and king of brother men,
Hero and martyr, lo! thou dost not sleep.
Thy dauntless soul, beyond our mortal ken,
Pursues life's journey through the eternal deep.

Elsewhere, not here, lives on the lofty aim,
The iron purpose of a steadfast life,
The strong, brave heart that forged a deathless name,
The tender love of duty, land and wife.

O mighty Sister in our royal line,
America! guard well his sacred dust.
Thy grief is ours, e'en as our blood is thine—
We twain who hold the great world's peace in trust.

Quebec, September 14, 1901.

The Martyr

THE dark square glimmers 'neath the morning skies,
And issuing slowly through the sombre gate
Come priest and monk, soldier and magistrate,
While, midst them, walks the prisoner, with his eyes
Bent on the ground, going to his sacrifice.

He limps, from tortures wrought by powerless hate,
He fronts wild wolves who for his life-blood wait,
Yet now he thrills with God's own harmonies.

Fearless, he stands above the great, hushed crowd :
He hears the monks drone out his burial song,
He feels the hot flames round the faggots creep ;
And, as the thick smoke wraps him in a cloud,
Which rolls to Heaven, his voice rings clear and
strong—
“ Thy Kingdom come ” : and so he falls asleep.

His Parting

THEY bore the little dying boy
Through his beloved wood,
The sweet song-sparrows hushed their joy,
The pine trees silent stood.

The tiny ripples from the lake
Crept noiseless down the shore,
And even the brook seemed for his sake
Less boisterous than before.

The sunbeams never blinked their eyes,
Quite still were light and shade,
While here and there the droning flies
A solemn music made.

'Twas plain his woodland friends had heard,
And nature all around
Mourned, as when some sweet singing bird
Has fallen to the ground.

But he, our little dying boy,
Forgetting all his pain,
Passed prattling by in childish joy
And never came again.

**“ Little Friend’s ”
Grave**

BUILD a house for “ Little Friend,”
Underneath the sunniest grass,
In a place where birds’ songs blend
On the breezes as they pass.

Dig it not with sorrow’s spade,
Use no sharp-edged tools of pain,
Nothing there must cast a shade,
Nothing there must leave a stain.

Build the walls of hope and joy,
Gladsome as the flowers and trees,
Else the little merry boy
Will not rest in it at ease.

Bring no torch or other light,
As though darkness could be there,
For a soul so pure and bright
Will give radiance everywhere.

Build the roof of faith and love,
Pillared on foundations deep,
That the rain of tears above
May not mar his happy sleep.

Make no windows, as though he
Needed peep-holes to the skies,
For the vast Eternity
Now is open to his eyes.

Build no staircase for his feet,
Make no door-way in the wall,
For he treads the golden street
Where the Christ is All in all.

Only let the cross be set
Upright in the hallowed ground,
Lest the stricken heart forget
Where the cure of grief is found.

Even-song
in the
Woods

HUSH, let us say, "Our Father," in this wood,
And through bare boughs look up into the sky,
Where fleecy clouds on autumn winds go by.
Here, by this fallen trunk, which long since stood
And praised the Lord and Giver of all good,
We'll sing "Magnificat." With curious eye
A squirrel watches from a branch on high,
As though he too would join us if he could.

Now in our "Nunc Dimittis," soft and low,
Strange woodland voices mingle, one by one ;
Dead songs of vanished birds, the sad increase
Of crumpled leaves on paths where rough winds go,
The deepening shades, the low October sun,—
"Lord, let thy servant now depart in peace."

The Mill-stream

CLEAR down the mountain, 'neath the arching green,
And o'er mossed boulders dappled by the sun,
With many a leap the laughing waters run.
They tumble fearless down each dark ravine,
And roam through caves where day has never been :
Until, at last, the open pool is won,
Where, by their prisoned strength, man's work is
done
In that old mill which branching cedars screen.

Here, all day long, the massy logs, updrawn
Against the biting saw, are loud with shrieks.
Here, too, at night, are stars and mystery,
And nature sleeping ; and, all round at dawn,
The rugged utterance of mountain peaks
Against the infinite silence of the sky.

By the
Sea

EVER the strong, salt life, ever the dream,
Ever the pulsing force, the mystery
Of tireless Nature working 'neath the stars
Her destiny apart from human things.

A Voice from Canada

(To an English Pro-Boer)

HUSH, babbling Pharisee,
Scribe, hypocrite, do we
Love, any more
Than you do, war?

Think you that darkling skies
And helpless orphans' cries
Do never keep
Our hearts from sleep?

Have not our blinding tears,
In these late anxious years,
Been wrung by pain
For loved ones slain?

Think you those hearts are steel
Who, for the common weal,
Thus lay down all
At duty's call?

You talk, but do not share
The heavy load we bear
Of sundered ties
And sacrifice.

That far-off lonely grave,
Where sleep the sons we gave,
Looms in our sight
By day and night,

We do not know what more
The future has in store,
What bitterer tears
May come with years,

But with set teeth we stand
To guard our Empire land,
To dare and spend
Unto the end.

So, critic, since for you
Our sons are fighting, too,
Your railing cease
And give us—PEACE.

Quebec, 1901.

By the Grave of Keats

THE sunset gold was fading from the sky,
The cypresses towered darkly overhead,
While through the deepening shade a pathway led
To where the bones of England's poet lie.
We heard the night-wind in the tall trees sigh,
Yet, as we stooped and on the white stone read
Those lines which tell the heart's woe of the dead,
Something that was not darkness blurred the eye.

"Whose name was writ in water,"—yea, 'twas so.
O passionate soul of beauty, youth and light,
Thy name is writ in water, earth and air,
It sings in birds' songs, scents all flowers that blow,
Lights up the forest glade, crowns the starred night;
Thy epitaph was triumph, not despair.

Song

(From the Italian of Guerrini)

WHEN the leaves are falling, Dearest,
And you seek the quiet mound
Where I slumber, you will find it
With a wealth of blossoms crowned.

Gather, then, for thy bright tresses
Those that from my heart have sprung ;
They're the love-thoughts that I spoke not,
And the songs I left unsung.

The Laurentians

THESE mountains reign alone, they do not share
The transitory life of woods and streams ;
Wrapt in the deep solemnity of dreams,
They drain the sunshine of the upper air.
Beneath their peaks, the huge clouds, here and there,
Take counsel of the wind, which all night screams
Through gray, burnt forests where the moonlight
beams
On hidden lakes, and rocks worn smooth and bare.

These mountains once, throned in some primal sea,
Shook half the world with thunder, and the sun
Pierced not the gloom that clung about their
crest ;
Now with sealed lips, toilers from toil set free,
Unvexed by fate, the part they played being done,
They watch and wait in venerable rest.

From Canada

MOTHER and Queen, from the golden West
We offer in love at the foot of thy throne
All we can give thee, our dearest and best,
Flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone.
Take them, Queen of the brave and free ;
They come in their love to die for thee.

Mother and Queen, from farm and mart,
From bank and factory, hill and plain,
They gather in love for a noble heart,
To lighten its sorrow and share its pain.
Take them, Queen of the brave and free ;
They come in their love to die for thee.

Mother and Queen, our homes were bright
And pure as the air of the sunlit north ;
But tears have darkened the women's sight
Since the day that the brothers and sons went forth.
Take them, Queen of the brave and free ;
They come in their love to die for thee.

Mother and Queen of the spotless throne,
Lady and Lord of the sea and land,
Thou makest our far-born sons thine own
By the tender clasp of a woman's hand.
Take them, Queen of the brave and free ;
They come in their love to die for thee.

Mother and Queen, from the strong, glad West,
From the rivers and plains where our children roam,
We give thee our dearest, our bravest, our best ;
Take them, Queen of our heart and home.
Asking no bounty, favour or fee,
They come in their love to die for thee.

Quebec, March 1, 1900.

Nature's Recompense

WITH barren heart and weary mind,
I wander from the haunts of men,
And strive in solitude to find
The careless joys of youth again.

I seek the long-loved woodland brook,
I watch the clouds when day is done,
I climb the mountain top and look,
All-eager, at the rising sun.

I plunge into the forest glade,
Untrodden yet by human feet,
And, loitering through the light and shade,
I hear the birds their songs repeat.

But all in vain, they will not come—
Those voices that I knew of old ;
Great Nature's lips to me are dumb,
Her heart to me is dead and cold.

In vain I lie upon her breast
And ask her for the dreams I seek,
She takes no pity on my quest,
I cannot force her lips to speak.

Then, haply, in a calm despair
I give up seeking, and I lie,
All-thoughtless, in the woodland air
And 'neath the leaf-bespangled sky.

And then it comes, the voice of old,
Which soothes the realms of death and birth,
The message through the ages told,
The cradle song of Mother Earth.

And as it thrills each languid sense
And lifts me from the world apart,
Great Nature makes full recompense
For her past coldness to my heart.

**Old
Michael**

DEAR Mother Earth, in this long wooden box,
We bring old Michael with his silvery locks ;
Such years he tended thee with pick and spade,
Right gladly wilt thou welcome his poor shade.

The Mount of Beatitudes

CHRIST sat upon the mountain side,
The blue sky overhead,
Beneath, in heaven's own colours dyed,
The lake's still bosom spread.

Some sparrows fluttered through the sky,
A breath the lilies stirred,
Far off a boat went drifting by
With white wings like a bird.

But, heedless of the sea and shore,
Christ turned aside to greet
The weary hearts who came to pour
Their sorrows at His feet.

I ponder o'er the scene so fair
Upon my bended knee,
Until I dream that I am there,
And, lo, Christ looks at me.

My Little Son

MY little son, my little son, he calls to me forever
Across the gulfs and through the mists which
shroud him from my sight;
I hear him in the noonday, in the midst of all the
turmoil,
I hear him, oh, so plainly, in the silence of the
night.

My little son, my little son, I see in clearest vision
The merry face, the deep, clear eyes, the crown
of golden hair.
But these, ah, these are sleeping where the hillside
glows with sunset,
And the little boy, my darling that I loved so, is
not there.

My little son, my little son, there are starry paths
at night-time,
Above the swaying tree-tops where the birds are
fast asleep;

Does he wander up and down them with the winds
in endless play-time?

Does he read in sudden manhood all the wonders
of the deep?

My little son, my little son, he hovers ever near me,
I meet him in the garden walks, he speaks in wind
and rain;

He comes and nestles by me on my pillow in the
darkness,

Till the golden hands of sunrise draw him back to
God again.

The Snowstorm

THE sky is hid in a snowy shroud,
And the road in the woods is white,
But the dear God watches above the cloud
In the centre of light.

In the woods is the hush of the snowflakes' fall,
And the creak of a lumberman's sleigh,
But in Heaven the choirs of the Master of all
Make praise alway.

Up there is the throne of the Triune God
And the worshipping multitudes,
And here is the long white winter road
And the silent woods.

The Windmill

A LITTLE toy windmill is turning,
Perched up on the roof of the shed,
Beyond it the sunset is burning,
And the limitless woods are outspread.

It knows not the winds that are blowing,
It asks not the clouds what they are,
While the gold of the sunset is going,
And over it looks out a star.

But alas for the hearts that are weary,
For as the night settles apace,
To the poor human spirit how dreary
And cold looks the starland of space.

The Night-wind

WHERE the huge clouds part,
A voice from God's heart
Saith unto me,
 In accents clear :
" Who hath eyes, let him see ;
 Who hath ears, let him hear."

The wind with delight
Shakes the mantle of night,
 And roars through the trees
 With the voice of the seas ;
And it saith to my mind:
" Some day thou shalt find
 Thy home in the deep,
 When death wakes thee from sleep."

The King's Bastion

(Quebec)

FIERCE on this Bastion beats the noonday sun,
The city sleeps beneath me old and gray,
On convent roofs the quivering sunbeams play,
And batteries guarded by dismantled gun.
No breeze comes from the northern hills, which run
Circling the blue mist of the summer's day ;
No ripple stirs the great stream on its way
To those dim headlands where its rest is won.

Ah God ! what thunders shook these crags of yore !
What smoke of battle rolled about this place !
What strife of worlds in pregnant agony !
Now all is hushed, yet here in dreams once more
We catch the echoes, ringing back from space,
Of God's strokes forging human history.

Leo XIII.

SERVANT of God, of thee the world had need,
For this thy glory, this thy triple crown,
Thy soul from out its battlemented creed
Glowed with that love which melts all barriers
down.

**Ad Ecclesiam
Anglicanam**

CHURCH of our heart and Empire,
Upon thy queenly head
There broods the living Spirit
Whom Christ Himself has shed ;
No more the dark dissensions,
The day of doubt is done,
When dangers gather round thee
Thy children stand as one.

Church of our heart and Empire,
Forgive the shameful past,
The worldly hearts that chilled thee,
The chains that bound thee fast ;
Behold, from the horizon
The clouds have rolled away,
And now with clearer vision
Men own thy gracious sway.

Church of our heart and Empire,
So bright thine annals shine,
The ages hold no triumphs
More wonderful than thine
Thou didst in old times cradle
Our rude and warlike race,
Thy sons are kings of honour,
Thy daughters queens of grace.

Church of our heart and Empire,
The new dawn rises fair,
And broader paths of glory
Are opening everywhere ;
Beyond the ocean's thunders,
As in the olden days,
Thy creeds give faith her utterance,
Thy voice her prayer and praise.

Church of our heart and Empire,
God's wings are o'er thee spread,
And loyal sons are ready
For thee their blood to shed ;
No more the dark dissensions,
The day of doubt is done,
And round thee in the battle
Thy children stand as one.





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Scott, Frederick George
A hymn of empire

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